

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-18, 20 and 21 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 1, 18, and 20 are amended. Support for the amendments to claims 1, 18, and 20 can be found, for example, in paragraph [0047] of the specification, as originally filed. No new matter is added. Reconsideration of this application in view of the August 10, 2010 Amendment, and further in view of the above amendments and the following remarks, is respectfully requested.

The courtesies extended to Applicants' representatives by Examiner Wang at the personal interview held on August 31, 2010, are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below, which constitute Applicants' record of the interview.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 3-6, 8, 9 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0098393 A1 to Dine et al. ("Dine"), in view of the Fuel Cell Handbook (FCH). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

The combination of Dine and the FCH would not have rendered obvious a power supply having a fuel cell that is configured to release all anode exhaust gas into the air, as recited in independent claim 1.

As discussed during the personal interview, Dine discloses that after the steps of disconnecting the primary load from the external circuit and shutting off the fresh fuel flow into the anode flow field, the anode exhaust is recirculated through the anode flow field and a recycle loop to continuously bring hydrogen remaining within the loop into contact with the anode catalyst of the cells to react with oxygen that diffuses across the cell from the cathode flow field to the anode flow field (Dine, paragraph [0014]).

In particular, Dine discloses an open anode exhaust vent valve 172 in an anode exhaust conduit 174 for use during normal fuel cell operation (Dine, paragraph [0033]). During operation, hydrogen containing fuel from the pressurized source 140 is continuously

delivered into the anode flow field via the conduit 168. A portion of the anode exhaust containing depleted hydrogen fuel leaves the anode flow field through the vent valve 172 via the conduit 174, while the recycle blower 150 recirculates the balance of the anode exhaust through the anode flow field via the recycle loop (Dine, paragraph [0034]). The Dine system is designed for shutting down an operating fuel cell system that recirculates a portion of the anode exhaust in the recycle loop so that all the hydrogen is reacted (Dine, paragraph [0014]). Thus, Dine does not disclose all of the features positively recited in independent claim 1. The FCH fails to overcome the deficiencies of Dine with respect to the above-mentioned features of independent claim 1, and is only applied for allegedly disclosing a hydrogen permeable metal layer. Accordingly, independent claim 1 is patentable over the combination of Dine and FCH.

Claims 3-6, 8, 9 and 21 depend from independent claim 1. Therefore, these claims are also allowable by reason of their dependence on independent claim 1, as well as for the additional features these claims recite. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejections be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Dine in view of the FCH, and further in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0033395 A1 to Thompson. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 7 depends from independent claim 1. Thompson fails to overcome the deficiencies of Dine and the FCH with respect to the above-mentioned features of independent claim 1. Therefore, claim 7 is also allowable by reason of its dependence on independent claim 1, as well as for the additional features claim 7 recites. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claims 10-12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Dine, in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,063,515 to Epp et al. ("Epp"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 10-12 depend from independent claim 1. Epp fails to overcome the deficiencies of Dine, the FCH and Thompson with respect to the above-mentioned features of independent claim 1. Therefore, dependent claims 10-12 are allowable by reason of their dependence from independent claim 1, as well as for the additional features these claims recite. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Withdrawn claims 13-17 depend from independent claim 1. Withdrawn claims 18 and 20 are amended similarly to claim 1. Accordingly, rejoinder of withdrawn claims 13-18 and 20 is requested when claims 1, 3-12 and 21 are allowed.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 3-18, 20 and 21 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

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